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RECENT WORK

BY ROB LORENSON



Simple Form

2000, Collection of South Bay
Development Corporation
Sunnyvale, California

Textural Gear

1998, Collection of Capitol Arts,
Providence, Rhode Island



So, what do you do?

Occasionally I find myself stopped dead in my tracks by the question asked of most artists, “what is it that you do?” I am never quite sure how to answer because what I do does not seem that out of the ordinary to me. As a sculptor I combine the skills of an ironworker, welder, engineer, rigger, heavy equipment operator, over-the-road trucker, logistics expert, public relations rep, accountant and artist. The career of any artist is multifaceted.

I made the decision to do what I do when I saw a film on the artist Henry Moore while a high school student. The artist was working with a crew of assistants on a large bronze in an enormous studio. What I saw was a career that could blend my intense love for building things with art, another one of my passions. What I do comes from my educational training that was in university art departments as well as an apprenticeship with the sculptor Bruce White. It was the nine years working for Bruce that I gained the majority of the knowledge that I apply and teach today.

Vortex

1997, Collection of Alan Rose
and Associates, Naperville,
Illinois

*The artist working on a
sculpture. Photograph by
Kara Andrews.*



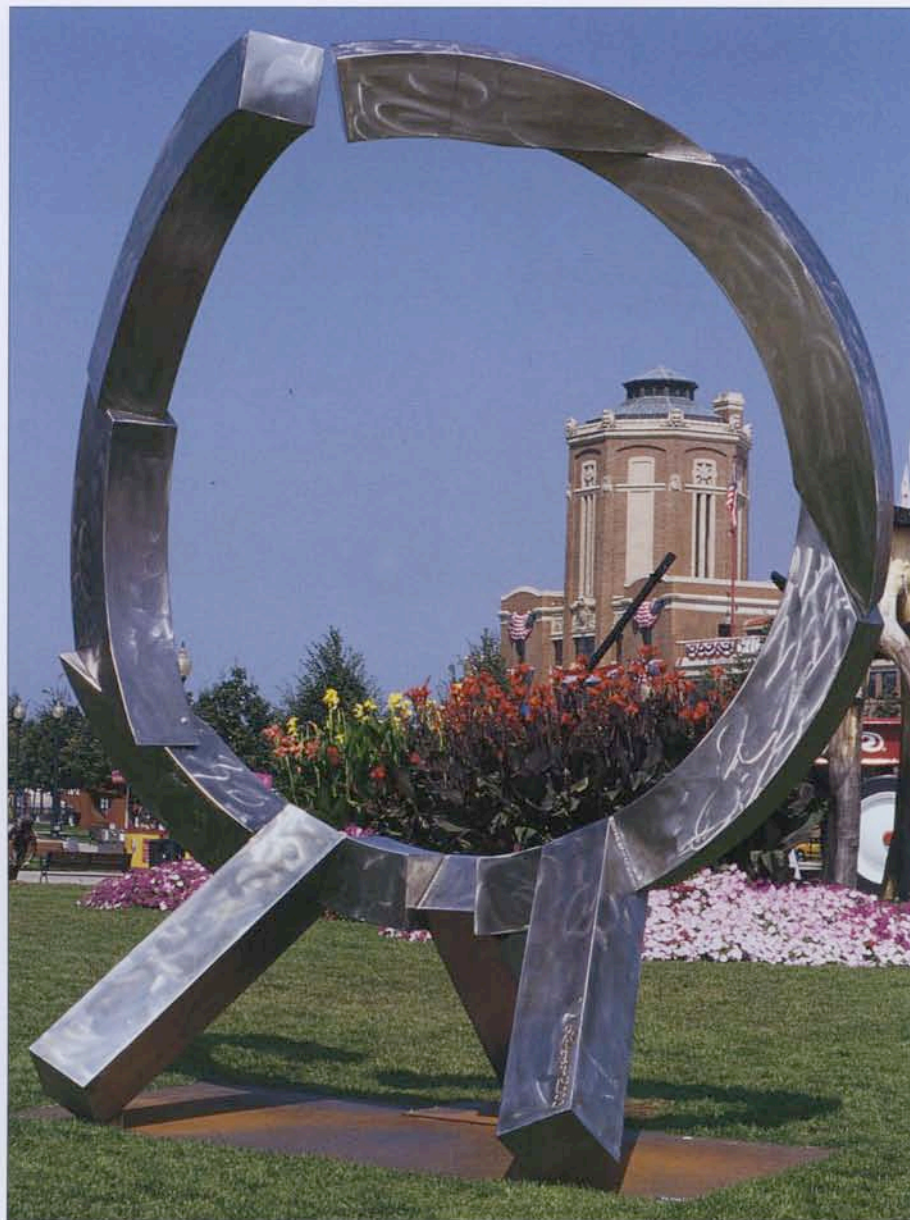
What I do is create works of public art. Many of them are large scale and are shown or have been placed in collections where they are seen by tens of millions of people every year. I prefer the public spaces as opposed to museums and galleries because the public spaces are democratic. While museums and most galleries are open to the public there are artificial cultural barriers that exist: Socio-economic and educational factors keep many Americans from attending museum and gallery shows.

What I do is rewarded with the appreciation of viewers that I have the opportunity to interact with, some of them at art openings and others at gas stations along America's interstate highway system while I am transporting artwork. The greatest reward comes from the people who are like me, builders. I enjoy the fact that a machinist or a millwright can understand and enjoy the work as much as an art critic, even though they might appreciate it for different reasons. The machinist will appreciate its craft, the beauty of its material. The critic may comment on its subtle form or constructivist heritage. The commentaries of the two are equally important to me.

So this is what I do, and I will keep on doing it because it is what I love to do.

Open Apex

*Installed as part of Pierwalk
2000, Navy Pier, Chicago,
Illinois*



Open Apex

*Loaded on the back of a flatbed truck for shipping and assembling on
Chicago's Navy Pier. Currently on exhibit as part of the Sarasota Season
of Sculpture, Sarasota, Florida*



*Rob Lorensen is Assistant
Professor of Art.*